

Title: **“THE DAY OF
THE LORD’S VENGEANCE”**

Text: Isaiah 34:1-17

Subject: *The Day of Judgment*

Date: Sunday Morning — November 3, 2019

Readings: *Psalm 11:1-7; Nahum 1:2-8*

Introduction:

Open your Bible to the Gospel of Isaiah. Isaiah chapter 34 will be my text. The subject of this chapter is judgment. It describes **“THE DAY OF THE LORD’S VENGEANCE.”**

(Isaiah 34:1-17) Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. (2) For the indignation of the LORD *is* upon all nations, and *his* fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. (3) Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. (4) And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and

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all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling *fig* from the fig tree. (5) For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. (6) The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, *and* with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. (7) And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness. (8) For *it is* the day of the LORD’S vengeance, *and* the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion. (9) And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. (10) It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. (11) But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the

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owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. (12) They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none *shall be* there, and all her princes shall be nothing. (13) And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, *and* a court for owls. (14) The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. (15) There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate. (16) Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them. (17) And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it forever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.

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This chapter opens with a call to all nations and people, the earth and all who are in it, the world and all who come forth from it, to hear the prophet’s message concerning God’s indignation. The chapter has three sections.

1. In verses 1-7 the Lord God announces his ultimate, final judgment of the whole world.

Edom is set forth as the leading, primary target of God’s indignation, because the Edomites, the children of Esau, were a people who wore God’s name but despised his grace, as Esau their father “*despised the birthright.*” Throughout the Scriptures Edom represents profane, sensual, religious people, men and women who call themselves the people of God, though they despise and oppose his gospel, his prophets, and his people (Hebrews 12:14-17; Isaiah 63:1-6).

(Hebrews 12:14-17) Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: (15) Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness

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springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled; (16) Lest there *be* any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. (17) For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

Isaiah 33 is all about God’s just wrath and his sure judgment upon all the wicked. In verse 6 the prophet tells us of God’s utter contempt of those countless sacrifices by which religious reprobates vainly hope, like Cain, to find acceptance with the Triune Jehovah. Yet, he tells us, “*the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah.*” — Rejoice and give thanks! — Christ is God’s sacrifice by whose blood justice is satisfied!

(Isaiah 63:1-6) Who *is* this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This *that is* glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. (2) Wherefore *art thou* red in thine apparel, and thy garments like

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him that treadeth in the winefat? (3) I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people *there was* none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. (4) For the day of vengeance *is* in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. (5) And I looked, and *there was* none to help; and I wondered that *there was* none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. (6) And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.

If the holy Lord God judged sin in his Son, you can be sure he will judge sin in you! God will judge all the world in righteousness. But he reserves the greatest severity of his wrath for those who, like Esau, have wilfully despised his grace, choosing instead their own ways (Deuteronomy 29:18-27).

(Deuteronomy 29:18-27) Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe,

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whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go *and* serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; (19) And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: (20) The LORD will not spare him, but then the anger of the LORD and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven. (21) And the LORD shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law: (22) So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the LORD hath laid upon it; (23) *And that* the whole land thereof *is* brimstone, and salt, *and* burning, *that* it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any

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grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath: (24) Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what *meaneth* the heat of this great anger? (25) Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt: (26) For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and *whom* he had not given unto them: (27) And the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book:

The most dangerous thing in this world that a man can do is hear the gospel and despise it
(Proverbs 1:23-33).

(Proverbs 1:23-33) Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. (24) Because I

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have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; (25) But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: (26) I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; (27) When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. (28) Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: (29) For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: (30) They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. (31) Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. (32) For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. (33) But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

2. **In verses 8-15 the details of God’s judgment are described by numerous metaphors.**

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I will leave it to the theologians to argue about whether these words are to be taken literally or symbolically. But I know this — The message of these verses is clear — God’s judgment will be universal. This present earth and heaven shall pass away, like Sodom and Gomorrah, under the fire of God’s wrath. When God gets done with this world nothing shall be left but darkness smoke, emptiness, and confusion. — A place for owls, bats, and beasts to roam freely. — A desolate place.

3. **In verses 16-17 Isaiah appeals to all men to read the Book of God and know the reality of his message.**

As God fulfilled his word to Edom, and made Edom a place of desolation forever, so too he will fulfil his threats of judgment upon the whole world. None shall escape his indignation, when **“THE DAY OF THE LORD’S VENGEANCE”** is come.

When I started to write out my notes for this message, the first words that came to my mind were those of the Apostle Paul in 2nd Corinthians 5:11. —

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“*Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.*” How I pray that God will now use me to graciously persuade you to make preparation for **“THE DAY OF THE LORD’S VENGEANCE.”**

Proposition: Throughout this chapter God is speaking to you and me, and saying, “*Prepare to meet thy God!*”

I am going to be as brief as I possible, but I ask you to give me your attention. I am talking about eternity. I am talking about your immortal soul. I am talking to you about the day of judgment — **“THE DAY OF THE LORD’S VENGEANCE.”** Here are six statements that I pray God will cause you to hear. Oh, may God the Holy Ghost shoot them as barbed arrows into your heart!

1. **There is a day appointed when God almighty shall judge the world “by that man whom he hath ordained”** (Acts 17:31).

(Acts 17:31) Because he hath appointed a day, in

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the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Some may laugh, and scoff, and think to themselves, “Bro Don is going to give us one of those ‘hellfire and brimstone’ sermons today.” But this is no laughing matter! I am telling you...

- You are going to die!
- You are going to die at God’s appointed time. — “*Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;*” (Job 14:5).
- As soon as you die you are going into eternity to meet a holy God in judgment!
- And you know it!
- Christ is coming again.
- When Christ comes the dead shall be raised.
- After this, the judgment!

2. **In that great and terrible day, God will deal with us all in strict justice, giving to us all**

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exactly what we deserve (Revelation 21:27; 22:11-15).

(Revelation 21:27) And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

(Revelation 22:11-15) He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. (12) And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. (13) I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. (14) Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. (15) For without *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

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- None shall be damned who have no sin.
- None shall be saved who are not perfectly righteous (Psalm 24:3-5; Hebrews 12:14).

(Psalm 24:1-5) The earth *is* the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. (2) For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. (3) Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who shall stand in his holy place? (4) He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. (5) He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

In that great day “God will judge the secrets of men; not only their secret works, but their secret thoughts, by Jesus Christ. The Lord, the Judge, will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart.” — *John Gill*

All the works and deeds of men will be judged. —
“*For God shall bring every work into judgment, with*

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every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Ecclesiastes 12:14).

All the words of man shall be judged (Matthew 12:36-37; Jude 15).

(Matthew 12:36-37) But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. (37) For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

(Jude 15) To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

Every thought of the heart and every motive shall be brought into judgment. — *“In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel”* (Romans 2:16).

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3. **The basis of divine judgment will be the books which God himself will open and search in that august day** (Daniel 7:9-10; Revelation 20:12).

(Daniel 7:9-10) I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and* his wheels *as* burning fire. (10) A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

(Revelation 20:12) And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

- **The Book of Creation** (Romans 1:18-20)

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(Romans 1:18-20) For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; (19) Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them. (20) For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.

(Psalm 19:1-3) The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. (2) Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. (3) *There is* no speech nor language, *where* their voice is not heard.

• **The Book of Providence** (Romans 2:4-5)

(Romans 2:4-5) Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? (5) But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself

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wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

- **The Book of Conscience** (Romans 2:14-15)

(Romans 2:14-15) For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: (15) Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.

- **The Book of Holy Scripture** (John 12:48) —
The Law and the Gospel

(John 12:48) He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

- **The Book of God’s Remembrance** (Malachi 3:16)

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(Malachi 3:16) Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.

- **The Book of Life** (Revelation 21:27).

(Revelation 21:27) And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

Revelation 13:8) And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

(Revelation 17:8) The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they

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that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

“This judgment out of the books is designed to show with what accuracy and exactness, with what justice and equity, it will be executed” (John Gill). —

4. **The only hope for my wretched, sinful soul in that great day is that someone will stand in my stead before the bar of God as my advocate, who is a suitable substitute and representative, who has met all the requirements of God’s holiness and righteousness, and satisfied all the demands of his offended justice, one who is able to answer the very character of God for me.**

Blessed be God, there is such a Substitute! There is such an advocate for sinners. — Jesus Christ the Righteous (2 Corinthians 5:10-21; 1 John 2:1-2).

- He fulfilled all righteousness in his life of obedience.

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- He satisfied God’s offended justice by his death at Calvary.
- He is himself God — God in human flesh!
- He is an advocate the Holy God must hear!

(2 Corinthians 5:10-21) For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. (11) Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. (12) For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to *answer* them which glory in appearance, and not in heart. (13) For whether we be beside ourselves, *it is* to God: or whether we be sober, *it is* for your cause. (14) For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: (15) And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

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(16) Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more. (17) Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (18) And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (20) Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. (21) For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

(1 John 2:1-2) My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: (2) And he is the

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propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only,
but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

See the love of God (Amazing!),
In the death of our dear Christ.
See His justice, truth, and mercy,
In our Savior’s sacrifice!
Justice called and mercy answered —
Jesus’ blood has satisfied!
Yes, the blood our debt has cancelled,
By the blood we’re justified!

Look, O sinner, see God’s glory,
A just God and Savior, too —
Justly, now, in holy mercy,
God can save and pardon you!
Justice called and mercy answered —
Jesus’ blood has satisfied!
Yes, the blood our debt has cancelled,
By the blood we’re justified!

5. **If I am found in Christ in that great day, when God searches the books, he will find nothing against me, no sin, no fault, no blemish, no trace**

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of sin, but only righteousness (Jeremiah 23:6; 33:16; 50:20).

- The book of creation will declare my compatibility in Christ with my Creator.
- The book of God’s remembrance will show no record of my sin.
- The book of God’s law will reveal a record of perfect obedience to God performed in my name.
- The book of the gospel will echo my right to life by the promise of God. — “He that believeth is not condemned!”
- The book of providence will recount the wonderful works of God for the salvation of my soul.
- The book of life will reveal my name written from eternity beneath the name of my Lord the Lamb.
- And the book of my own conscience will declare my worthiness of everlasting glory through the blood of Christ.

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In that great day, my Savior, the Lamb, my Advocate, the Judge of all the earth, who must do right, will take me by the hand and say, *“Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord! Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!”*

(Jeremiah 23:6) In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

(Jeremiah 33:16) In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness.

(Jeremiah 50:20) In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be none*; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.

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6. If in that great day, you hope to be accepted of God, you must be found in Christ.

Come to Christ. Without him, you are lost forever! Come to Christ and live forever. “*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*” Christ is everything you need.

- Life!
- Righteousness!
- Atonement!
- Reconciliation!
- Acceptance with God!

(2 Corinthians 6:1-2) We then, *as* workers together *with him*, beseech *you* also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (2) (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.)

Amen.